

they could not fight. They didn't have the arms. But the Croats got the arms, they ignored the arms embargo, and they fought back. When they did, President Milosevic cut a deal.

I think we need to look at the option of helping people who are willing to help themselves rather than keep a fight artificially unfair.

Fourth, we should not even threaten the use of troops except under clear policies. One clear policy should be if the security of the United States is at risk. When should we deploy our troops? We need a higher standard than we have seen in the last 6 years. Look at the war in the Persian Gulf. The U.S. security interests were at stake. A madman, with suspected nuclear and biological weapons, invaded a neighboring country and threatened the whole Middle East. It could have realigned the region in a way that would have a profound impact on the United States and our allies and subjected the entire territory to chemical, biological, and perhaps nuclear weapons.

We, of course, should always honor our commitments to our allies. If North Korea invades the south, we are committed to helping our allies. We also have a responsibility toward a democratic Taiwan, which has been under constant intimidation from Communist China. We have the world's greatest military alliance, NATO, where we are committed to defend any one of those countries that might be under attack from a foreign power.

It is in the U.S. interest that we protect ourselves and our allies with a nuclear umbrella. Yes, we would use troops to try to make sure a despot didn't have nuclear capabilities.

These are clear areas of U.S. security interests. However, the United States does not have to commit troops on the ground to be a good ally. If our allies believe they must militarily engage in a regional conflict, that should not have to be our fight.

The United States does not have to commit troops to be a good ally. If our allies believe they must militarily engage in a regional conflict, that should not have to be our fight. We could even support them in the interest of alliance unity. We could offer intelligence support, "airlift," or protection of non-combatants. We do not have to get directly involved with troops in every regional conflict to be good allies.

When violence erupted last year in Indonesia, we got it about right. We stepped aside and let our good ally Australia take lead. We helped with supplies and intelligence, but it wasn't American ground troops facing armed militants.

Instead, we should focus our resources where the United States is uniquely capable; in parts of the world where our interests may be greater or where air power is necessary.

It is not in the long-term interest of our European allies for U.S. forces to be tied down on a peacekeeping mission in Bosnia or Kosovo while in some

parts of the world there is a danger of someone getting a long-range missile tipped with a germ warhead provided by Saddam Hussein and paid for by Osama Bin Laden.

A reasonable division of labor—based on each ally's strategic interests and unique strengths—would be more efficient and more logical.

What has been the result of our unfocused foreign relations? Qualified personnel are leaving the services in droves. In the past 2 years, half of Air Force pilots eligible for continued service opted to leave when offered a \$60,000 bonus.

The Army fell 6,000 short of the congressionally authorized troop strength last year. We used up a large part of our weapons inventory in Kosovo. We were down to fewer than 200 cruise missiles worldwide. That may sound like a lot, but it's just a couple of days worth in Desert Storm.

So let's be clear that if we do not discriminate about the use of our forces it will weaken our core capabilities. If we had to send our forces into combat, it would be irresponsible to send them without the arms they need, the troop strength they need, and the up-to-date training they must have. It takes 9 months to retrain a unit after a peacekeeping mission into warlike readiness.

As a superpower, the United States must draw distinctions between the essential and the important. Otherwise, we could dissipate our resources and be unable to handle either. To maximize our strength, we should focus our efforts where they can best be applied. That is clearly air power and technology. This will be the American responsibility, but troops on the ground where those operations fall short of a full combat necessity can be done much better by allies with our backup rather than us taking the lead every time.

Any sophisticated military power can patrol the Balkans, or East Timor, or Somalia. But only the United States can defend NATO, maintain the balance of power in Asia, and keep the Persian Gulf open to international commerce.

I thank the distinguished Senators ROBERTS and CLELAND for allowing Members to discuss these issues in a way that will, hopefully, help to solve them in the long term.

Mr. ROBERTS. Senator CLELAND and I thank the distinguished Senator from Texas for her contribution.

MEASURE READ FOR THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 1838

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I understand H.R. 1838 is at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill for the first time.

The legislative assistant read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1838) to assist in the enhancement of the security of Taiwan, and for other purposes.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I now ask for its second reading, and I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The bill will be read the second time on the next legislative day.

Mr. ROBERTS. I yield the floor.

ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Mr. CLELAND. I understand Senate Resolution 286 expressing the sense of the Senate that the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations should hold hearings and the Senate should act on the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), introduced earlier today by Senator BOXER and 32 cosponsors, is at the desk, and I ask for its immediate consideration.

Mr. ROBERTS. On behalf of the majority of the committee, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The resolution will go over under the rule.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. If there is a 5-minute limit on morning business speeches, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 9 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. GRASSLEY pertaining to the introduction of S. 2404 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana is recognized.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. GRAMM, and Mr. CRAIG pertaining to the introduction of legislation are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Ms. LANDRIEU. I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Members permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each, until the hour of 1:30 p.m. today, with time to be equally divided between the two leaders.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 2323

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:30 p.m. today the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 481, S. 2323, under the following limitations: 1 hour for debate on the bill, equally divided

between the majority and minority leaders or their designees. I further ask consent that no amendments or motions be in order to the bill, and that following the use or yielding back of time, the bill be read a third time and, finally, the Senate then proceed to a vote on the passage of the bill, with no intervening action or debate, at a time to be determined by the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CRAIG. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that though we have the previous unanimous consent agreement, I be able to speak for up to 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

Mr. GRAMM. Mr. President, yesterday, as I listened to our Democrat colleagues talking about the marriage penalty elimination, and their opposition to our bill, I got interested in this debate and eager to speak on it.

I know we have not been able to work out an agreement yet to bring the bill to the floor. I know our Democrat colleagues have refused to agree to limiting it to amendments relevant to the marriage penalty. We all know the easiest way to kill something around here is to pile a bunch of extraneous amendments on it.

I am hopeful we can work out these differences and that we can have a vote on eliminating the marriage penalty. The American people have a right to know where Members of the Senate stand on this critically important issue.

The repeal of the marriage penalty was adopted in the House by an overwhelming vote. I believe it should be repealed. I am hopeful the President will sign the bill, even though to this point in time he says he will not. But rather than waiting around for some agreement to be made—that may never be made—I felt I had something to say that ought to be heard on this issue.

What I would like to talk about today is, first, to set this debate within the context of the President's budget and basically highlight the choice we are making between spending here in Washington, where we sit around these conference tables and make decisions to spend billions of dollars, and spending back home in the family, where the families sit around the kitchen table and try to decide how to spend hundreds of dollars or thousands of dollars for themselves.

I would like to talk about our repeal of the marriage penalty and why it is the right thing to do, why it is not just a tax issue, why it is a moral issue. This is a moral issue we are talking about.

I want to talk about the so-called marriage bonus that some of our colleagues have thrown up. I want to try to point out how it is one of the more phony issues that has ever been discussed.

I want to talk about President Clinton's alternative to our repeal of the marriage penalty.

Finally, I want to talk about the last form of bigotry that is still acceptable in America; that is, bigotry against the successful.

I would like to try to do all that in such a way as to deviate from my background as a schoolteacher and be brief.

First of all, let's outline the choices we have. The President has proposed in his budget that we spend \$388 billion over the next 5 years on new Government programs and expansions of programs.

This is brand new spending. This is \$388 billion the President's budget says we ought to spend above the level we are currently spending, and we ought to do it on a series of new programs and program expansions—about 80 new programs and program expansions.

We have proposed that we give the people of America \$150 billion of the taxes they have paid above the level we need to fund the Federal Government, and at the same time to save every penny of money that came from Social Security taxes for Social Security.

Many people who have followed this debate heard our Democrat colleagues spend all of yesterday saying, it is dangerous, it is irresponsible, it is reckless to let the American people keep \$150 billion of this non-Social Security surplus we have in the budget because the American economy is generating more revenues than we need to pay for the current Government.

The question I would ask, and that I would ask Americans as they are sitting in front of their television screens or as they are sitting around the kitchen table doing their budget, is: How come it is irresponsible for us to let working families spend \$150 billion more of their own money, but it is not irresponsible to let President Clinton and Vice President Gore and the Democrats spend \$388 billion of their money? How come it is irresponsible when families get a chance to keep more of what they earn, and yet it is not irresponsible to take more than twice that amount of money and spend it in Washington, DC?

Why repeal the marriage penalty? Gosh, most people are shocked when they discover that we have such a thing. Let me quickly point out, I do not think anybody ever set out with a goal of imposing a penalty on marriage.

When many of the provisions of the Tax Code were adopted, only 30 percent of adult women worked outside the home; now it is roughly 60 percent. The world has changed dramatically since much of the Tax Code was written.

As Abraham Lincoln recognized long ago: To expect people to live under old

and outmoded laws is like expecting a man to be able to wear the same clothes he wore as a boy. It just does not work.

No matter who set out to do it, we have in today's Tax Code a provision of law that basically produces a situation where, if two people, both of whom work outside the home, meet and fall in love and get married, they end up paying on average about \$1,400 a year in additional income taxes. Paradoxically, that is true if they meet, fall in love, and decide to get married on the last day of December. They pay \$1,400 more of income taxes for the right to live in holy matrimony for one day. The number gets much bigger for working couples who make substantial income, and it gets bigger for working couples who make very moderate income.

Today, if a janitor and a waitress—the janitor has three children; the waitress has four children; they are both working; they are struggling, trying to do the toughest job in the world, which is to make a single-parent home functional—meet and fall in love and have the opportunity to solve one of their great problems, by their getting married, they not only both lose their earned-income tax credit but they end up in the 28-percent tax bracket. We literally have a disincentive in the Tax Code for people to form the most powerful institution for human happiness and progress in history; that is, the family.

This obviously makes no sense. Nobody argues that it makes sense. Even the people who oppose repealing it agree that the Tax Code does not make any sense. They simply want to spend the money that would be given back, and so they don't want to give it back. They don't say it makes sense. They don't say it is fair.

I think it is not only unfair, it is immoral. How dare we have a Tax Code that penalizes people for getting married? So we want to repeal it.

Where does the penalty come from? I know people's eyes glaze over when we talk about numbers. I will not talk about many of them today, but let me try to explain why it happens.

If you are single and filing your tax return, you pay at the 15-percent rate on income up until you earn \$25,750. Let's say you and your sweetheart both get out of school and begin teaching, and you both make \$25,000 a year, and you are both paying 15-percent marginal tax rates. If you get married, then, at a combined income of \$43,000, roughly, you go into the 28-percent tax bracket.

So the first reason for the marriage penalty is that in the case of these two young people who fell in love, got married, were making \$25,000 each, they were paying 15-percent marginal tax rates each, and they got married, \$7,000 of their joint income is taxed at 28 percent.

Secondly, the standard deduction is such that you end up losing and getting